

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



1.4  
Ed 542 B22

MAKING POULTRY PAY

LIBRARY  
RECEIVED  
★ SEP - 1934

A radio talk by Dwight M. Babbitt, County Agricultural Agent, Huntordon<sup>4</sup> Agricultural County, Kentucky, delivered in the Land-Grant College radio hour, August 15, 1934, and broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations.

-----oOo-----

In discussing this very important subject let us consider, for a few minutes, three poultrymen who represent three types of commercial egg producers. First, there is Bill Jones who always makes money on his birds. Back in 1922, in 1926, 1929, and even in 1934, the poultry flock on this farm always more than paid its way. Then there is John Smith who used to make money when eggs were \$1. a dozen but the depression year, when eggs dropped to 20 cents a dozen or less, put him out of the chicken business. The third case is Tom Brown who never could make a cent out of chickens, even in good poultry years.

To find the factors that attribute to success in poultry keeping let us study these three men for a few minutes and see wherein they differ. Jones got his start a few years ago by buying stock from a neighbor breeder who had brood health and production into his strain by following careful scientific breeding practices. This neighbor's stock had always shown up well in the egg-laying contests, and Jones know that it could be relied upon when it came to "shelling out" eggs.

Since he regards the rearing of good pullets as the most important part of poultry keeping, he gives especial attention to the brooding and rearing, and develops an A-1 bird. Briefly, here's how he does it. He mates his own breeders and produces his own chicks. He makes a special point of getting his chicks hatched early since he has found from experience and observation that late-hatched chicks do not do nearly as well as early hatched stock. He provides large rotated ranges which makes it possible to grow healthy birds relatively free from intestinal parasites. He never places over 300 chicks under a stove and is careful about his fires so that the chicks are never over-heated or chilled. His stock, since it is in a community where pox is prevalent, is vaccinated when it is 8 to 10 weeks of age. Since he has had outbreaks of bronchitis in previous years, all of the Jones pullets are now vaccinated for this disease at the same time they are vaccinated against pox.

Jones' pullets, at the time they are ready to be housed, are a sight to behold. They are full plumaged, have good-sized bodies, have large shanks which are as yellow as gold, and have that alert, bright appearance. Jones provides good laying houses so that his layers will be comfortable in winter and summer. He avoids crowding and allows 4 square feet of floor space per bird. Plenty of mash hopper space, water fountains, nests and roosting poles are provided. As a result of this careful management the mortality through the year is very low. The number of birds culled out is about one half of what the ordinary poultryman usually sends to market. The primary factor in Mr. Jones' success is a flock of well-reared pullets to put in the laying house each fall. The secondary factor of importance is good management given the layers.

(over)

Smith, on the other hand, has about the same grade of stock and equipment, but does not give his birds as close attention as Jones does. Cannibalism frequently starts among his chicks in the brooder houses and this continues in the laying house, with mortality from pick-outs exceptionally high. This man is either a lazy or has some other interest which takes so much of his time that he does not rotate the ranges as he should, and consequently the loss from coccidiosis and intestinal parasites is heavy. The result of these poor brooding methods is a smaller number of pullets to house and an inferior bird. The larger mortality results in a costlier pullet, which adds to the overhead and helps break the poultryman. Then, these birds that have been weakened by diseases and intestinal parasites keep dropping off during the year and by the time summer rolls around, the plant is running at about one half capacity or less.

The third poultryman, Brown, is one who doesn't believe in making much of an investment in stock. He purchases chicks and usually buys about the cheapest ones he can find, in order to save a little more money, and waits until prices are low, usually in May or June. Since he has not made any money from poultry, he doesn't believe in putting much money into it. The roofs of the old houses are poor, which means that the houses are wet much of the time. Under these conditions, you will agree it is almost impossible to make poultry produce enough eggs to pay feed costs.

So let us briefly summarize the factors for success and which must be followed closely in times like these.

Commercial egg production, to be profitable, depends largely upon good stock. This means starting with good chicks and growing them on a rotated or cultivated range; that is, relatively free from contamination. Start the chicks early and don't overcrowd, overheat, or chill, and, if pox and bronchitis are prevalent, vaccinate and insure against losses from these diseases. To make poultry pay, do more for the growing pullet and she'll do more for you when you house her.

-----